



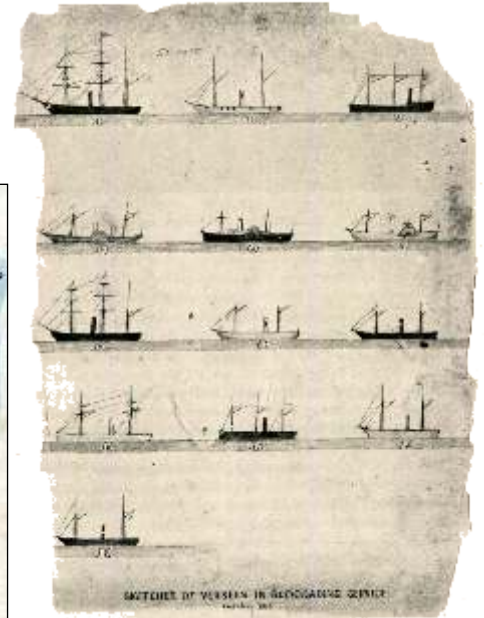
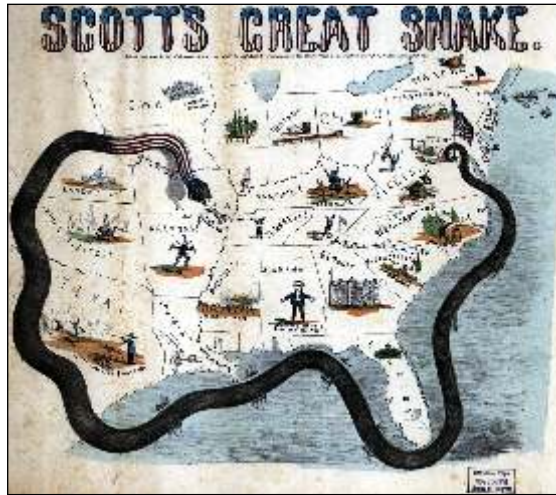
Brazoria County Historical Museum

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The Wreck of the SS Acadia

During the Civil War, the Union imposed a blockade on the Confederacy. Running the blockade was quite lucrative, which led to the development of a new class of very fast steamships that could outrun the US Navy squadrons.

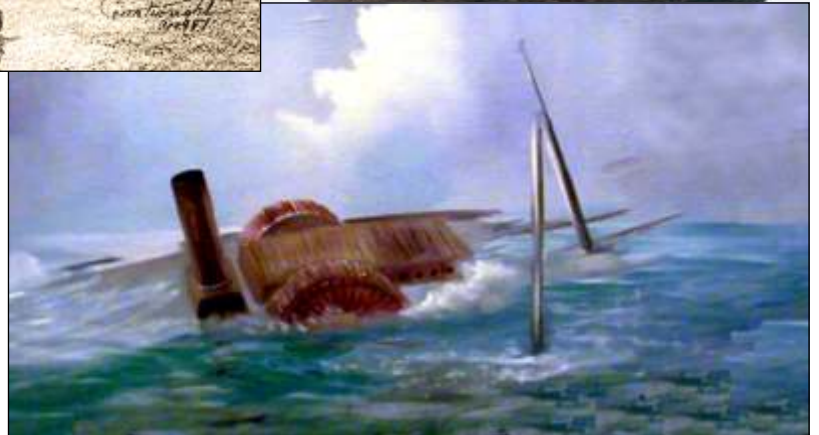
A new class of steamship was developed during the war called the Clyde River Steamers. This Scottish design was a very fast side-wheel steamship with a low profile. The SS Acadia was one such steamer built late in the war in Canada specifically to run the blockade.



The USS Virginia was a member of the Galveston Squadron that blockaded Texas.
Sketch courtesy of the Rosenberg Library



The ship's captain tried to run the blockade and land at Quintana; however, he lost his way in the fog and ran it aground instead. The following morning, the USS Virginia spotted her stuck on a sandbar, opened fire and destroyed the SS Acadia.





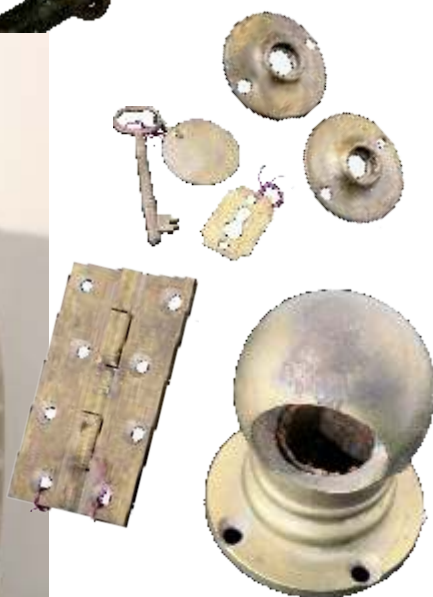
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The Wreck of the SS Acadia

The blockade was intended to deny the Confederacy from receiving military supplies. However the independent operators who tried to smuggle goods into the south found better prices for luxury goods. The SS Acadia was common in this respect with a cargo of wine and porcelain dinner ware.

Brass and ceramics survive well in salt water, so the bulk of the material recovered from the SS Acadia are plumbing pieces and ship hardware.



In the 1960s and 70s, Dr. Wendell Pierce and Frank Hole from Rice University examined the wreck and recovered a large number of artifacts that are now kept at the Brazoria County Historical Museum.

